

THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment

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4 FEB 1980

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NOTE FOR THE DIRECTOR

Attached is our response to Dr. Brzezinski's request for an analysis of a recent Economist article on Jordan's West Bank policy.



Bruce C. Clarke, Jr.

Attachment:
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The Deputy Director
Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Zbig,

Attached is a memorandum giving our assessment of Jordan's West Bank policy and comparing our information with that contained in The Economist article as requested by the President.

Yours,

Frank C. Carlucci

Att: a/s

The Honorable Zbigniew Brzezinski
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20506

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4 February 1980

MEMORANDUM

JORDAN AND THE WEST BANK

There has been an increase in the scope and extent of Jordanian activity in the West Bank along the general lines described in The Economist article. We doubt, however, that the increase represents either an "about turn" in Jordanian policy or an attempt on the part of King Hussein to "... undertake the administration of self-government in the West Bank as laid down in the Camp David treaty..." as The Economist claims. We attribute Jordan's stepped up activity to:

- Hussein's belief that the autonomy negotiations are on the verge of collapse and that he must have his political assets on the West Bank ready for the next steps. The King has no alternatives to autonomy in mind, but wants to be prepared for developments such as a change in the Israeli government or a return to the Geneva conference.
- Amman's desire to boost its supporters in the area in anticipation of the now canceled municipal elections, which had been scheduled for April 1980.
- The Jordanian perception that the increasingly obvious disarray in the Palestine Liberation Organization gave them an opportunity to undercut PLO influence in the area. The general improvement in PLO-Jordanian relations over the last year has had little effect on the often bitter rivalry between the two for influence in the West Bank.

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] of the Near East South Asia Division, Office of Political Analysis. It was coordinated with the Office of Economic Research, the National Intelligence Officer for Near East South Asia and the Director of Operations. Questions and comments should be addressed to Chief, Israel-Levant Branch, [redacted]

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--Concern that Communist activity in the area was beginning to make inroads into the ranks of Jordan's supporters.

--Availability of about \$70 million in aid funds pledged to the West Bank at the 1978 Baghdad summit. This money is supposed to be administered by a joint Jordanian-PLO committee, but in fact Jordan has controlled the aid distribution and funneled it to Amman's backers in the area.

The Jordanian activity also reflects traditional Jordanian concern about maintaining political influence in the West Bank, a concern that has been evident since the area was occupied by Israel in 1967. To this end, Jordan has continued to provide a number of services to West Bankers and has sought to use its aid programs to boost its political stock among West Bankers. Jordan has continued to pay salaries to many West Bank civil servants who were on its payroll before 1967. We have little hard evidence on the extent of these payments but one recent estimate claimed that Amman pays salaries to over 20,000 civil servants in the West Bank in addition to about 5,000 retired workers.

Amman also provides loan and grant aid to West Bank villages and municipalities. These loans provide Jordan with substantial political leverage in the area. Finally, Hussein has long made direct payments to a number of "King's men" in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These are usually former Jordanian officials, Moslem religious leaders and heads of the powerful clans who have dominated the West Bank's politics for decades.

These activities serve to fulfill several Jordanian objectives including:

--Reinforcing the image of an historical political connection between the two banks of the Jordan River and thus quietly keeping alive Jordan's claim to the area.

--Helping Hussein retain valuable political assets in the area, thus insuring that whatever the political future of the West Bank, Amman will have a body of supporters there to protect its interests.

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Consequently, we believe the recent increase in Jordanian activity reflects traditional Jordanian policy of taking advantage of favorable conditions to increase its political influence in the area and should not be seen as marking either a specific change in Jordanian policy or renewed interest in the autonomy talks.

NFAC Comments on Points Raised in The Economist

1. Jordan is undertaking a census on the West Bank.

These reports began to appear in the Israeli press in September 1979. We have no other evidence that such a survey is underway and Jordanian officials have denied they are undertaking a census on the West Bank, although one is now being taken on the East Bank.

2. Jordan is opening passport offices on the West Bank.

Jordanian officials admit that they have revived activity by their passport officials on the West Bank but maintain that the changes are merely administrative and designed to streamline the process by which West Bankers obtain travel documents. They deny any political significance in these changes. We believe that the Jordanian denials are not strictly correct and that Amman has in fact tried to use these new passport procedures to increase its visibility in the West Bank.

3. Jordanian interior ministry officials have been ordered back to work.

Jordan has paid some civil servant salaries more or less continuously since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967 and has urged so-called "vital" bureaucrats--teachers, police and firemen--to remain on the job in spite of the occupation. We suspect the interior ministry officials may have been recalled to help with the new passport procedures.

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4. Jordan is planning a new university in East Jerusalem.

From time to time various PLO officials have talked about plans to establish a "Palestine Open University" in East Jerusalem but we have no evidence that these plans have gone beyond the talking stage or that Jordan is involved. West Bank Arab universities--there are now three four-year institutions operating in the area--are in theory run from Amman, but in practice they operate largely independently. West Bank universities get some money from Jordan, but raise most of their money themselves.

5. Jordan is dispensing large sums to West Bank co-operatives.

This is the area in which we have noted the greatest increase in Jordanian activity in recent months. Amman has had some difficulty securing Israeli military government permission to transfer large sums to the West Bank co-operatives

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[redacted] . We believe the Jordanians are using the co-operative movement in an effort to bypass the municipal mayors, many of whom are outspokenly pro-PLO.

6. Jordan is building government hospitals in Ramallah and Nablus.

We have seen no reports on this, although the Israeli press has reported that Jordan may be planning to fund a hospital in East Jerusalem.

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SUBJECT: Jordan and the West Bank

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